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CLAIMS

- Process for preparing alkali- and heat-stable sugar alcohol compositions which exhibits an optical density lower than or equal to 0,100 in an S-test, characterised in that a sugar alcohol composition is treated with a strong base anion exchange resin in the hydroxide form, at a temperature between 30 °C and 100 °C.
- 2. Process according to claim 1, characterised in that in said process the sugar alcohol composition is fed to a column-system containing a strong base anion exchange resin in the hydroxide form with a volume throughput of ≤ 6 bed volumes (BV)/hour.
- 15 3. Process according to claim 2, characterised in that a single column-system is used.
 - 4. Process according to claim 2, characterised in that a multiple column-system is used, in which at least part of the columns of the system is used in a regeneration mode, while the remaining columns are used in a service mode, comprising the steps of stabilisation and simultaneous decolourisation.
 - 5. Process according to any one of claims 2 to 4, characterised in that the volume throughput is between 0,1 and 1 BV/hour.
 - 6. Process according to claim 5, characterised in that the volume throughput is between 0,2 and 0,8 BV/hour.
- Process according to any one of claims 1 to 6, characterised in that said sugar
 alcohol composition has a conductivity value less than 100 μS/cm before treatment with the strong base anion exchange resin.

8. Process according to claim 7, characterised in that said sugar alcohol composition has a conductivity less then 50 μ S/cm before treatment with the strong base anion exchange resin.

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- 9. Process according to any one of claims 1 to 8, characterised in that said strong base anion exchange resin belongs to the thermally stable-type category.
- 10. Process according to any one of claims 1 to 8, characterised in that said strong base anion exchange resin is of the styrenic type I, type II or type III.
 - 11. Process according to any of claims 1 to 8, characterised in that said strong base anion exchange resin is of the acrylic resin type.
- 15 12. Process according to claim 10 or 11, **characterised in that** when using a styrenic type I or type III, or an acrylic type resin, a column temperature is used between 45 °C and 70 °C.
- 13. Process according to claim 11, characterised in that when using a styrenic type
 20 II resin, a column temperature is used which is less than 45 °C.
 - 14. Process according to claim 10, characterised in that when using a thermally stable resin, a column temperature is used which is more than 75 °C.
- 25 15. Process according to any one of claims 1 to 14, characterised in that said sugar alcohol composition is prepared by hydrogenating a starch hydrolysate, obtained from an acid conversion, a combined acid-enzymatic conversion or a multiple enzyme conversion of starch.
- 30 16. Process according to any one of claims 1 to 14, characterised in that said sugar alcohol composition is prepared by hydrogenating reducing sugars belonging to

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the categories of keto- or aldopentoses, keto- or aldohexoses, disaccharides or non-starch oligosaccharide mixtures.

- 17. Process according to any one of the preceding claims, characterised in that said sugar alcohol composition has a pH-value between 8,5 and 9,5 when sorting from the strong base anion exchange resin.
 - 18. Sorbitol composition containing at least 95% sorbitol on dry substance and exhibiting an optical density lower than 0,02 in an S-test.
- 19. Sorbitol composition according to claim 18, characterised in that it contains at least 99 % sorbitol on dry substance and exhibits an optical density of lower than 0,01 in an S-test.